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TELEPHONE WEST 129.

CHICAGO.
U. S. A.

THE FERN INDUSTRY.

Extensive and Profitable Sale of the Numerous Varieties.

We learn from a Massachusetts paper that about eight years ago a gentleman in that State thought that it would be profitable to have picked and placed on the market some of the ferns which grow in abundance in his neighborhood, and from this modest beginning the business has grown to such proportions that last year he disposed of 7,000,000 ferns. Previous to 1880 the gathering of ferns in their natural state was almost an unheard-of industry. The new ferns put on the market were raised in hot houses, though a few florists sent their men after wild ferns. But how the Massachusetts ferns are shipped to every State and almost every large city in the country, and strange as it may seem, there has been no falling off in the trade during the business depression, the demand constantly exceeding the supply.

There are two varieties of marketable ferns which always find a ready sale—the delicate leafed "fancy" and the coarser "dagger" fern. The season for gathering and shipping the ferns is from Oct. 1 to May 1. Although now some two hundred persons are engaged in fern picking, only about sixty do it constantly. Good pickers can earn from \$4 to \$6 a day, while the pay of others not so skillful in finding the natural treasures amounts to only \$2.

The ferns are brought in by the pickers, tied in bundles of twenty-five each, and 40 cents a thousand is paid for them. An average amount of \$4 a day is paid the pickers. The ferns not needed for immediate shipment are packed in low rooms, containing each about 1,000,000 ferns. There are eight buildings containing these rooms. The ferns are placed in beds of 20,000 each, dry moss is placed between the layers, and the whole bed is covered with wet moss. The greatest care and daily watchfulness are needed to keep the ferns from becoming heated, and thus leached or covered with white spots. The ferns are invaluable to the florists, as they form a really essential groundwork for designs, and they are also available for general decorating.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

An Exciting Crap Game.

One of the notable features of a not otherwise interesting crap game down in Flemingsburg, Ky., the other day was that after it was all over the doctors removed three flattened pistol bullets from under the scalp of one of the negro players. Aside from the slight punctures in his scalp the man was uninjured. The bullets had not even dented his skull. Of the other players, one was badly slashed with a razor, another had a pistol bullet in his thigh, another had a bullet in his arm, and another had a bullet in his hip.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Mexican's Divorce March.

Ambitious Mexican—I have fame at least in my grasp.
"How so?"
"You know Mendelssohn's 'Wedding March' helped amazingly in making his fame."
"Well, what of it?"
"I am going to write a divorce march."—Exchange.

Early Days of Paderewski.

Paderewski was a musician from his earliest infancy. Left motherless at the age of 3, he was already able to play, and before quite 7 years old was immersed in study. He received his first lesson from a fiddler, and at 16 made a tour through Russia, playing chiefly his own compositions. He married when 19, and, his wife dying a year later, he threw his whole soul into music.

A Word with a Podigree.

No dreadful word is "podigree" in the sense of "drink" that one is disposed to take for granted that it came from some extremely modern slum and has not yet even earned a place in the slang dictionaries. Such is by no means the case. Spelled "podigree," but pronounced exactly after to-day's fashion, it occurs in Massinger's famous play, "A New Way to Pay Old Debts." The middle English form was "howse."

Pound Beer in the Sink.

A peculiar incident occurred in New York on a recent Sunday. While a policeman of that city was trying to see what was going on in a "suspicious" saloon he soiled his hands; he noticed a sink in the ante-room of the saloon, and when he turned on the faucet he was surprised to find that he was washing his hands in beer. The keeper of the saloon was, of course, arrested.

Must Do Penance for a Fortune.

An eccentric old bachelor, who died lately at Odessa, Russia, bequeathed 4,000,000 rubles (about \$2,000,000) to his four nieces on condition that they first go into service as chambermaids, washwomen or coal women for fifteen months. The local police are charged with the duty of seeing that the condition of the will is strictly complied with. So far the heiresses have received 893 offers of marriage.

That.

Here is an example of how far the use of the word "that" may be carried: The author said, in speaking of the word that, that that that that lady passed, was not the that that that gentleman requested her to analyze. This sentence, though rendered intelligent by good choice of words, is grammatical.

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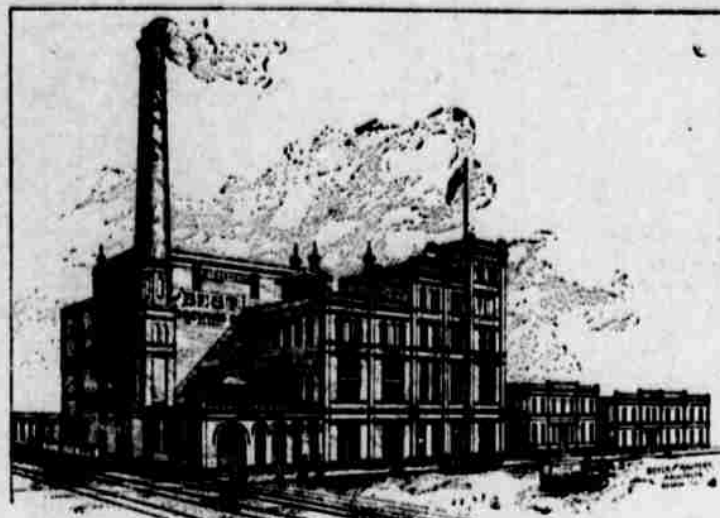
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New Orleans, La.,
FEB'Y 18, 1896.

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EXCURSION

—VIA—

THE ST. LOUIS & NEW ORLEANS ANCHOR LINE.



The elegant passenger steamer CITY OF HICKMAN will leave ST. LOUIS Saturday, Feb. 1, at 5 p. m.

Steamer CITY OF ST. LOUIS will leave ST. LOUIS Saturday, Feb. 8, at 5 p. m.

Fare, including meals and stateroom berth, \$20 one way, or \$36 for the round trip. Return tickets good on any Anchor Line steamer thirty days from date of sale. Staterooms reserved in advance by applying at Company's office, St. Louis, or agents at Cairo, Illinois, and Memphis, Tennessee.

A special rate of \$40 for the round trip, including meals and berth on board of boat while in port (three days) at New Orleans will be made to passengers leaving on steamer CITY OF ST. LOUIS Saturday, Feb. 8. Send for Illustrated Folder.

CHAS. M. BERKLEY, Gen. Pass. & Tkt. Agt., St. Louis, Mo.